

CONTACT:

Mr. Tai Freligh, Communications Manager
NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development
Phone: (603) 271-2343, Option #2 / **Cell:** (603) 545-4840
URL: www.visitnh.gov

Email: tai.freligh@dred.state.nh.us
Twitter: www.twitter.com/VisitNH
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VisitNH
Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/VisitNH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**SUCCESSFUL COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Concord, New Hampshire, October 15th, 2013 – Traffic through the tolls from Friday through Monday of the Columbus Day Weekend was up nearly 4-percent compared to last year's holiday weekend. Almost 1.5 million vehicles passed through New Hampshire's turnpikes over the four day weekend. Sunday was up around 9-percent over last year.

There were more travelers visiting our state welcome and information centers in Colebrook, Littleton, Sanbornton and Sutton this year than last year. The rest area on the northbound side of the Hooksett toll received 17,490 visits over the holiday weekend.

"We have heard from many of our New Hampshire tourism industry properties that the Columbus Day Weekend was busy and successful," said Lori Harnois, director of the New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development.

"Our state park campgrounds were open later this year and we saw occupancy rates similar to the middle of summer in New Hampshire," said Phil Bryce, director of the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation. "Attendance at mountain-based parks like Mt. Kearsarge and Crawford Notch in the White Mountains was excellent. We had 6,000 visitors to Monadnock State Park alone. It was a big weekend for us."

Gregg Pitman with the New Hampshire Campground Owners Association said, "We surveyed our member campgrounds for availability over the Columbus Weekend and found very limited availability, especially in the White Mountains. This was a big weekend for campers from backpacking to RVs."

Lodging properties were booked up in the White Mountains of New Hampshire for the holiday weekend. Janice Crawford with the Mount Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce said, "As of Friday afternoon we were unable to find any availability and emailed our lodging properties to be sure to call the information booth over the weekend if they had cancellations."

“We had a wonderfully busy holiday weekend. A majority of our guests visited from Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey and of course New Hampshire and Maine,” stated Emma Burnell with Muddy Paw Sled Dog Kennel in Jefferson.

Group tours arriving in Wolfeboro were steady for the two weeks leading up to Columbus Day. “Those buses coupled with visitors traveling to the area on their own lead to a wonderful, never-ending stream of people enjoying attractions, shops and restaurants over the holiday weekend,” said Mary DeVries with the Wolfeboro Chamber of Commerce.

“We were packed for four days and the phone did not stop ringing asking about availability. Our guests went to hike Mt. Kearsarge, drove to Bretton Woods, Canterbury Shaker Village and New London,” said Pecco Beaufays, innkeeper for the Highland Lake Inn in Andover.

Bob Manley, owner of Hermit Woods Winery in Sanbornton said, “We had our best Columbus Day Weekend ever.”

ABOUT THE DIVISION OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Travel and Tourism Development, as part of the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, works with the state’s seven travel regions to increase visitation, travel and visitor expenditures in order to expand business activity and employment throughout the state. The division is responsible for domestic and international advertising and public relations, literature publication and distribution, www.visitnh.gov administration, grant administration and research to monitor and measure the impact of travel and tourism to the state. For more information about New Hampshire tourism, call 603-271-2665 or visit www.visitnh.gov.

#